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SECURITY INFORMATION

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INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT

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The Utilization of Prison Labor at Factories  
In Albertfalva (Budapest)

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(LISTED BELOW)

PLACE  
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SUPPLEMENT TO  
REPORT NO. 50X1-HUM

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1. Location:

In view of the fact that all prisons are overcrowded the authorities have had to "rent" also "private" buildings. One of these new prisons is in the grounds of the Factory for Building Material (Építételemgár) in Albertfalva, in southern Budapest. For the exact location see the attached sketch.

2. Description of the building:

The prison, which is called "the red house" (Vörös Ház), is a four-story building accommodating 1,000 prisoners in its central block. In the right wing of the "red house" there are the so-called "cabins" in which the guards live; in the left wing there are offices and administration rooms. In the right wing of the central part there are 14 rooms and in the left wing 16 rooms.

3. The prisoners:

- a. Even in the smallest rooms there are 30 inmates and during the months of September and October 1951 beds had to be put up in the corridors of the 4th floor in order to accommodate the 1,200 prisoners who were at that time in the prison. The barracks in the courtyard were also used for another 120 inmates. Later on these barracks were used as dining rooms.
- b. Approximately 100 of the prisoners in Albertfalva were sentenced for political offences, and came from the prisons in Jászberény and Márianosztra. Most of the other prisoners, who all have to serve a sentence of five years or less, came from the state prisons in Szeged and Gyula. There were only 40 - 50 farmers in Albertfalva who were sentenced because they had not fulfilled their delivery obligations.

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- c. Approximately 600 of the prisoners work in the factory "Épületelemgyár" and another 200 in the nearby factory for agricultural machines FMAG (Első Magyar Gazdasági Gépgyár).

4. Guards:

- a. The area on which the prison is situated is surrounded by a 2 m. high concrete wall, on the outside of which there are altogether 12 watch towers (Nos. 9 on the sketch). These towers are occupied from Monday morning until the end of working hours on Saturday by armed guards.
- b. On the front of the "red house", which faces the Andor utca, there are two more watch towers which are also occupied outside working hours by three guards each. During the evening and night the "red house" is lit up by flood lights in order to stop any attempts to escape. The guard personnel consists of 110 men who are armed with pistols and machine pistols. This means that there is one guard for each 8-10 prisoners.

5. Prison personnel:

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- a. Head of the guard department is Lt. Colonel István Raffai

- b. Deputy Manager of the "red house": Lt. Sárközi (fnu)

- c. Beky (fnu), who was already Raffai's right hand man in Vác.

- d. Staff sergeant Bánhidí (fnu)

- e. Political officer of the prison: NCO Szalay (fnu)

- f. Political sergeant: Demény (fnu)

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- g. Specially brutal jailers who are dreaded in Albertfalva are: Corporal Szilősi (fnu)

Sergeant Szilágyi L (fnu)

and Corporal Agoston (fnu)

6. Security measures:

- a. The civilian workers of the factory for building material are told time and again that they must not talk to the prisoners and that they have to consider them as inferior people. At the beginning of January 1952 Major Somuti (fnu) said in a speech to the civilian workers that in case of an air-raid they must help to guard the prisoners so that none could escape. At the same time all prisoners were given small wooden identification discs with their names and cell numbers, which they have to carry with them at all times.

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- b. At the intervention of Koczian (fnu), the Party Secretary of the factory for building material, as of January 1952, the prisoners cannot have their food in the factory but have to return to the "red house" for lunch. Since the "red house" is approximately 500 m. distant from their place of work, and the lunch-hour only lasts a half an hour, the prisoners have hardly time to eat their meal.

7. Daily schedule:

5.30 a.m. Reveille, washing, dressing, and breakfast.  
At 6.45 a.m. the prisoners must be in the courtyard for the roll call. From 7 a.m. until noon they work and then march to the "red house". After lunch there is another roll call, then back to the factory for work until 5 p.m. If supper is not ready at 5 p.m. the guards amuse themselves by searching the prisoners for forbidden articles smuggled into the prison. After supper the clothes and shoes have to be cleaned and at 9 p.m. lights are turned out. Prisoners who are on night shift work until 6 a.m., but they can only return to their quarters when the day officer has started his duty at 7.30 or 8 a.m. which means that they don't get to bed before 8.30 a.m. They have to get up for lunch but are allowed to go back to bed until 6 p.m. The night shift begins at 8 p.m.

8. Working conditions:

The forced laborers work under the most difficult conditions; their norms are so high that they can hardly ever earn any extra pay to send to their relatives. When a prisoner is released his financial account for the past three months is still outstanding because the bookkeeping is always three months behind. If a prisoner had the bad luck to work in a spot where he could not earn enough to pay for his food, he must pay his debts to the prison authorities in monthly installments from the wages he earns as a civilian worker after leaving the prison.

9. Clothing:

In the prison the clothing as well as the living conditions are very bad. Most of the prisoners wear felt suits or former police or army uniforms which have been dyed, some also striped prisoners' suits, and heavy working shoes or boots. On 31 December 1951 underwear was taken away from the prisoners and now each prisoner only possesses one set of underwear.

10. Punishment:

The four unheated "correction cells" in which the prisoners are chained for punishment, are of concrete and approximately 2 x 3 m. in size, with damp walls. Saturdays and Sundays approximately 30 prisoners are locked in these cells. Two of these "correction cells" are also dark cells. For the duration of the "correction arrest" the prisoner's food is reduced. Breakfast consists of 1/5 liter bitter coffee, 400 g. bread; lunch: 1/5 soup ration and 2/5 vegetable ration. On Sunday evening the prisoners are dismissed from the cells and on Monday morning they have to start work again, otherwise they are sent back to the "correction cell".

11. Factory for building material:

- a. Leading personnel: Director of the factory is Engineer Kristofoli (fnu), an expert who was employed in the factory before. He owes his appointment as director in January 1952 to the Party Secretary Koczian (fnu), who always found fault with the former manager, chiefly on account of the large amount of reject production and because of his mild treatment of the prisoners.

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- b. **Production:** The factory produces separate parts and housing accessories which are badly needed by the Hungarian building concerns, such as ferro concrete traverses, fence posts, fence plates, ferro concrete traverses for coal mines, special tiles, concrete pipes and doors and windows for air-raid shelters. Most of the parts which are manufactured in Albertfalva, can be assembled on the building site which enables especially fast construction.
- 1) **Traverses:** The most important products of the factory are the ferro concrete traverses of which various types are produced. The so-called "higher works" specializes on the production of these traverses. In the foundry two shifts of 8 men each work on a production line and one man in each shift on a mixing machine. The normal traverses are between 4.5 m. and 6.6 m. long and the so-called corridor (gang) traverses between 2.6 m. and 4.8 m. There are great difficulties with the production of traverses for coal mines, which are supposed to replace mine wood of which there is a shortage. These traverses were supported by rod iron of 14 and 4mm. thickness. However, the carrying capacity did not come up to the necessary standard. Especially the concrete mixture was faulty and cracked. After the trial production of 1,500 of these traverses, production was stopped in March 1951. At the beginning of December 1951, however, the laboratory tests were successful enough to start production again.
  - 2) **Doors for air raid shelters:** The doors are 5-6 cm. thick and weigh 150-189 kg. The doors as well as the windows are produced to a standard size for the whole of Hungary so that they can be used everywhere. The greatest difficulty with the production of the heavy doors is the fitting of the door hinges which have to be welded on to the iron frame with concrete before casting. Most of these hinges break off already when they are being fitted and the doors are of no use because it is not possible to weld the hinges later. Consequently, the percentage of rejects is very high. At present the factory is working on an order for 50,000 doors for air-raid shelters. The windows are smaller and a grown up person can barely crawl through the opening. The daily production is not known, but it is believed that approximately 30-35 doors can be produced per day.
- c. **Raw materials:** The supply of material in the factory is very good and there is hardly ever a shortage of raw materials. The chief materials used are rolled iron, commercial steel (Handelstahl), cement, and macadam. Iron is supplied by the Rákosi Works in Csepel and by the Iron Works in Ózd, and every now and then there are large deliveries from Eastern Germany. Binding wire is supplied by Czechoslovakia. The wire which is used is 2.04 and 5.6 mm. in diameter and the rod iron, 8, 10, 12, and 14 mm. The Portland cement is very stable and is delivered from Tatabánya and partly from Poláď, while the gravel is obtained from the bed of the Danube by dredgers belonging to the factory.
- d. **Tracks:** The factory has several industrial tracks which lead directly into the factory area from the station of Kelenföld-Budapest.
- e. **Norms:** The norms for the production of these iron parts are quite high. The concrete foundry, for example, produces in 24 hours in two shifts, 400 m. of traverses of type G60, i.e. 6 m. long traverses. The daily production of fence poles for 16 men is 600-700. A two-man shift can produce 70 coal mine traverses. 500 coal mine traverses have been produced in two shifts and it must be added that 3 traverses form a complete bearer.

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- f. Sabotage: It is not surprising that a lot of sabotage is committed by the prisoners. Material which cannot yet be used because it should remain for some time in the drying room is sent to the various building sites and arrives in broken pieces as it is not yet hard enough. The ferro concrete traverses, for example, can only be used after having been stored in the drying troughs for three weeks. The prisoners who should carry the heavy traverses from the production site to the drying troughs, spare themselves this heavy work by simply loading the damp ferro concrete traverses. The following is an example of yet undiscovered sabotage: a steam generator supplies the drying troughs with hot air of 60-80 degrees Celsius. During the night the prisoners switch off the main pipe of the generator so that the hot air flows into the open and the drying troughs remain cold. By doing this the drying of the traverses stored in the trough is often delayed for days. The factory also uses an enormous amount of fuel because the stokers do not know why the temperature in the drying troughs is so low and thus have to heat even more. In November 1951 the prisoners filled the ball-bearings of the cars of a freight train with sand. The train caught fire because of this, while still within the factory area.
- g. "Free workers": Beside the actual prisoners there are 10 workers in the factory who are forced to work here. They receive the same wages as the civilian workers but also have to pay 20% tax to the Ministry of Justice.

12. EMAG Factory:

- a. Workers: Approximately 200 prisoners work in the nearby EMAG factory; they are mostly criminals and only 10% of them are political prisoners. The working conditions in this factory are considerable better than those in the factory for building material.
- b. Production: Of the threshing machines type AC. 400, which were produced in this factory in summer 1951, 76 machines had to be sent back for repairs. 400 threshing machines were supposed to be produced in 1951, but at the most one machine left the factory each day. The production of these agricultural machines is hindered because the factory also produces ammunition cases (mine cases).

Key to the sketch of the area of the Factory for Building Material.

1. "Red house" area
2. "Red house" buildings
3. & 4. Factory for Building Material
5. Factory entrance Budafoki ut 78
6. Factory entrance Andor utca (3826/3)
7. Side entrance
8. Industrial track from the Kelenföld station
9. Watch towers
10. Wall, 2 m. high
11. Factory Warehouse

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Attachment I

Area of the Factory for Building Material

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